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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Summary record of the 7th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 16 June 2004, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Aisi ..... (Papua New Guinea)

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04-39083 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Requests for hearings (aides-memoires 10/04 to 12/04)

2. **The Chairman** drew attention to the aides-memoires 10/24 to 12/04, which contained requests for hearings on the questions of the Cayman Islands, Guam and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). If he heard no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to accede to that request.

3. *It was so decided.*

Question of New Caledonia (A/AC.109/2004/11 and A/AC.109/L.9)

4. **The Chairman** drew attention to the working paper prepared by the Secretariat on the question under consideration (A/AC.109/2004/11).

5. **Mr. Ovia** (Papua New Guinea), introducing the draft resolution on the question of New Caledonia on behalf of his delegation and the delegation of Fiji, said that the draft essentially duplicated last year's resolution, by comparison with which the draft being submitted contained only minor changes and reflected events that had taken place since that time. The delegation of France and, through it, the delegation of New Caledonia had been acquainted with the text of the draft resolution. The Governments of France and New Caledonia by and large had no objections to the adoption of the proposed draft resolution. In addition, the speaker noted that the working paper (A/AC.109/2004/11) contained information on some of the recent changes in the composition of the government in Nouméa, and he proposed that those changes be reflected in the draft resolution that would be submitted to the Fourth Committee later in 2004.

6. New Caledonia continued to participate in regional cooperation as an observer in the Pacific Islands Forum, whose visiting mission, pursuant to the Nouméa Accord, goes to New Caledonia every year to acquaint itself directly with economic, social, political, and constitutional developments. As could be seen from the report prepared on the basis of the results of the 2003 visiting mission, the developments were generally in line with the Accord. Nonetheless, much still needed to be done, especially for the systematic development of all three areas of the country. He recommended that the Special Committee adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

7. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/L.9 was adopted without a vote.*

8. **The Chairman** announced that the Special Committee had concluded its consideration of the agenda item.

Question of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Tokelau, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the United States Virgin Islands (*continued*) (A/AC.109/2004/2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 1317; A/AC.109/2004/L.10)

Question of Tokelau

Hearing of the representative of the Non-Self-Governing Territory

9. **The Chairman** reported that New Zealand's Permanent Mission the United Nations had informed him of the presence at the Special Committee meeting of the Ulu-o-Tokelau (the titular head of the Territory) and Administrator of Tokelau. With the consent of the members of the Committee and in keeping with standard procedures, he proposed that the Committee give him the floor.

10. *It was so decided.*

11. **Mr. Patuki Isaako** (Ulu-o-Tokelau) said that 2003 was marked by important developments for Tokelau. First, Tokelau's experience was used as a typical example of a successful decolonization process at the Pacific Regional Seminar on Advancing the Decolonization Process in the Pacific Region, which was held in Madang, Papua New Guinea (A/AC.109/2004/1). Second, a Principles of Partnership statement was officially signed, in connection with which Tokelau was given full control over the administration of its budget. Third, an entire array of important legislative elements was approved.

12. The General Fono unanimously adopted a resolution to further develop the concept for the status of free association with New Zealand. The resolution opens the way for constructive interaction with the Government of New Zealand on key matters of the self-Government of Tokelau. Tokelau has systematically

moved forward with its partners toward the culminating moment in its history – the act of self-determination – and the speaker thanked the Special Committee for the honour accorded his country by its being chosen as an example in the context of the Madang seminar's work. At that same seminar, members of the Special Committee were acquainted with recent events concerning Tokelau and with its plans for the immediate future. The speaker drew the Special Committee's attention to two documents: the report on the consultations over constitutional issues, which was prepared in May-July 2003, and the report on the 17-21 November 2003 General Fono sessions devoted to constitutional and legal issues. The preparation of those two extremely important documents, which reflect the constitutional and political evolution of Tokelau en route to achieving complete internal self-government and, ultimately, self-determination, was financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

13. An important development consisted in the transfer of power by the Administrator to the councils of elders (taupulegas) and the further delegation of authority by those councils to the General Fono with regard to the services that must be provided at the national level. The changes in the law required for the practical transfer to the taupulegas of the power to provide certain public services have entered into force. Thus, beginning 1 July 2004, public services at all three atolls were being provided by the taupulegas. That was warmly greeted by the residents of Tokelau. In addition, the General Fono adopted resolutions pertaining to important elements of the Guidelines and Rules of Conduct for state employees of Tokelau, including regulations on the prescriptions and procedures for appeals. Other important decisions were also taken: on compensation and subsidies for members of the taupulegas; on Tokelau's participation in Pacific Islands Forum affairs; and on the national symbol of Tokelau.

14. In the subsequent period of consolidation, measures would be taken to strengthen the potential of state services, the taupulegas, the General Fono, and executive bodies. Preparation of the text of the constitution would be completed, the state hymn would be approved, and the state flag would be raised over the atolls. A workshop of the Special Committee on the Constitution would be held in Tokelau in October 2004, and the speaker invited the Chairman of the Special Committee to take part in it. The process for the development of the mechanism for potential free association between Tokelau and New Zealand would be advanced substantially.

15. Referring to issues of the economy and the well-being of the people of Tokelau, the speaker reported the creation of an NZ$6.4 million Trust Fund for Tokelau. Despite financial difficulties, the General Fono had allocated NZ$50,000 to the Trust Fund this fiscal year. New Zealand was making the largest contribution to the Trust Fund, and the speaker expressed his gratitude to that country for its support.

16. Tokelau was not evading its obligation to do as much as possible with its own resources, but his country could not achieve all its goals by itself. The speaker again called upon the Special Committee and institutions of the United Nations system to do everything they could to maintain or augment the Tokelau Trust Fund. Similar information on other economic initiatives was given in a calendar of events for the next 12 months, which was presented to the Special Committee.

17. In conclusion, he expressed his gratitude to the Special Committee and to the UNDP, which was the Tokelau's second-largest donor, as well as to the Government of New Zealand, for their material and moral support, and he hoped that, after the act of self-determination, New Zealand would not leave his country without assistance.

18. **Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic) commended the efforts of the Ulu-o-Tokelau and his administration, as well as of the Government of New Zealand, to quickly satisfy the aspirations of the Tokelauans regarding self-determination. He was confident that the people of Tokelau would achieve self-determination, and his confidence was based on the fact that Tokelauans were making steady progress toward it and had a clear picture of their future. Despite all the obstacles the Ulu-o-Tokelau had mentioned in his address, the international community was prepared to continue to provide aid to the Tokelauans and to support the efforts of the Government of New Zealand aimed at completing the very successful process of Tokelau's self-determination. The international community understood that the people of Tokelau, in that context, would need financial and other material aid, and he was confident that the Special Committee would be able to provide constructive assistance in the provision of that aid, given that it had pointed to the need for such assistance in its resolutions and in other documents.

19. **Mr. Ortiz Gandarillas** (Bolivia) said that he had a special connection to Tokelau, because he had been part of the visiting mission to that territory in 2002. Since that time, Bolivia no longer considered Tokelau just a little island in the ocean. It was a territory populated by people with their own hopes and dreams. He was pleased to note that the administering Power, New Zealand, was cooperating under the United Nations mandate. He felt it particularly pertinent to emphasize that, at the current meeting, the representative of Tokelau was accompanied by the New Zealand ambassador, which set a precedent that other countries should follow. He was also pleased to note the successful course of development of the process as a result of which Tokelau residents would decide on self-determination, and the answer to the question of whether the Tokelauans, New Zealand, and the Special Committee were ready for that should be given by the inhabitants themselves of the territory.

20. **Mr. Okio** (Congo) said that his delegation was in complete support of the efforts of the Ulu-o-Tokelau and the Government of New Zealand, the administering Power, that were aimed at quickly creating the institutions necessary for achieving the genuine self-determination for Tokelau. He was confident that the international community would continue to support the Tokelauans in the decolonization process, which was itself a positive example of real cooperation between a Non-Self-Governing Territory and the Power administering it, cooperation that was aimed at creating the conditions necessary for self-determination. Thanking the Ulu-o-Tokelau for the information that he had provided the Special Committee, the speaker wished the Tokelauans success in continuing and completing the process of self-determination, and he said he was confident that the international community would provide Tokelau all the logistical support necessary for that.

21. **Mr. Rojas** (Chile), sharing the positive view of the Ulu-o-Tokelau's address expressed by the other delegations, said that the Committee again noted the successes that Tokelau and New Zealand were achieving together, which indicated complete mutual understanding between them. He also felt it necessary to note Tokelau's interest in participating in the Pacific Islands Forum, which would give it a regional character.

22. **Mr. Requeilo Gual** (Cuba) was thoroughly satisfied with the progress of the process for the decolonization of Tokelau, typical of which was not only the active participation of the public, but also the across-the-board cooperation of the administering Power. Cuba hoped that the territory's decolonization process would be completed in the near future.

23. **Mr. Walter** (Administrator of Tokelau) said that New Zealand's approach to its dependent territories was traditionally grounded in three principles. First, New Zealand always recognized its obligation to encourage greater political autonomy for territories and always supported them in that process. Second, New Zealand always felt that the people themselves of a territory should determine both the direction and the pace of political processes. Third, New Zealand from the beginning had striven toward across-the-board cooperation with the United Nations as a whole and with the Special Committee in particular in terms of fulfilling its obligations as an administering Power, to include receiving the fact-finding and monitoring missions and ensuring the direct participation of the territories in the work of the Committee.

24. As the 2002 visiting mission had noted, Tokelau was, in many ways, already determining its fate autonomously. Created over the last three decades were legislative bodies, an Executive Council, and a court system. The work on preparing the constitution was in an advanced stage. Tokelau completely controlled its budget and the operation of state services, and it had its own ferry service and telecommunications system. The territory was developing relations with its neighbours and was a member of a number of regional international organizations and groups.

25. In June 2003, the General Fono decided to create a new political structure based on three village councils, and that decision was implemented in less than two weeks. In October 2003, the participants in a special constitutional workshop held in Tokelau generated a number of recommendations regarding the Tokelau constitution, the work of the General Fono and the court system, and the observance of human rights pacts in Tokelau, and those recommendations were later approved by the General Fono. In November 2003, Tokelau and New Zealand signed a document titled "Joint Statement of Principles of Partnership", the text of which was submitted to the Special Committee. The document enunciated the rights and obligations of the two partner countries, and it served as a sound basis for Tokelau's further constitutional and political development. In addition, after detailed consultation with all three village councils and allowing for the

recommendations of the Special Constitutional Committee, the General Fono decided to discuss with New Zealand a self-determination option in the context of free association. The first round of official talks had already been held, and subsequent meetings were planned for later in the current year. That issue would also be considered at the meetings of the Special Constitutional Committee and the General Fono in October of this year.

26. Work would also continue – both in Tokelau and in New Zealand – in areas such as ferry service, health care and education, telecommunications, and economic development. The speaker also felt the need to note that to achieve success in it was doing, Tokelau would need support from the Special Committee, regional organizations, and neighbouring countries. In that connection, the speaker was especially grateful to the UNDP for the aid that it was providing to Tokelau through its regional office in Samoa. Moreover, at the Pacific Regional Seminar's attention had been directed to the international trust fund created by Tokelau and New Zealand to support the development of the territory. The speaker noted that that fund was a suitable mechanism for assisting the implementation of bilateral and multilateral aid programmes.

27. **The Chairman**, after expressing his gratitude to the Ulu-o-Tokelau and Administrator of Tokelau for the exhaustive information they had provided, said he would inform the Secretariat that the Ulu-o-Tokelau had invited him to visit the territory to participate in a special constitutional workshop. Then he directed the Committee's attention to the text of the draft resolution on the question of Tokelau that was contained in the document A/AC.109/2004/L.10.

28. **Mr. Ovia** (Papua New Guinea), introducing the draft resolution on the question of Tokelau on behalf of his delegation and the Fiji delegation, said that its text contained several amendments and corrections that reflected events that had taken place over the previous 12 months. The text had been agreed to in consultations between New Zealand, representatives of Tokelau in the person of the Ulu-o-Tokelau, and the delegations of Papua New Guinea and Fiji. After noting with satisfaction the successful processes that had taken place in Tokelau, the speaker stated that the Group of Eminent Persons, under the direction of the former prime minister of Papua New Guinea, had recommended that representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories be invited to participate in annual regional summits of leaders as observers.

29. As for the draft resolution, the speaker suggested that a number of amendments be made to it. First, in the last line of paragraph 11 of the resolution, he suggested that the word "associated" be deleted, because Tokelau was a full-fledged member of the Forum Fisheries Agency. In addition, he felt it necessary to record in the draft the Chairman's invitation to participate in the special constitutional workshop in Tokelau. In that context, he suggested that a new paragraph 12 bis be included that would read as follows: "notes the invitation by the Ulu O Tokelau for the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration the Granting of Independence to Colonial countries and Peoples to attend the Constitutional Workshop in Tokelau in October 2004". The speaker proposed that the draft resolution be adopted as orally amended, without a vote.

30. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2004/L.10, as orally amended, was adopted without a vote.*

31. **The Chairman** announced that the Special Committee had concluded its consideration of the item.

Question of the Cayman Islands

Hearing of petitioner

32. *At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Ebanks (Chamber of Commerce of Cayman Islands) took a place at the petitioners' table.*

33. **Mr. Ebanks** (Chamber of Commerce of Cayman Islands), speaking on behalf of the Constitutional Working Group created by non-governmental organizations and initiative groups of the Cayman Islands, said that the Cayman Islands had achieved considerable success: Moody's had assigned the Cayman Islands a credit rating of AAA, the standard of living in the Cayman Islands was now one of the highest in the Western hemisphere, the Cayman Islands had a well-regulated international finance sector and a dynamic tourism sector, and they had harmonious interracial and social relations, an excellent infrastructure, rich maritime traditions, and a rather low level of crime. Maintaining those socio-economic achievements was a top priority for the people of the Cayman Islands.

34. The speaker recalled that, the year before, Mrs. Sophia Ann Harris had first addressed the Committee on behalf of the Working Group, which had been created by non-governmental organizations and initiative groups to study constitutional issues and to keep the public of the Cayman Islands informed of the constitutional review underway. In her address, Mrs. Harris had noted that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in the context of the constitutional review process, was not providing the necessary information as required by the 14 December 1960 General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the 15 December 1960 resolution 1541 (XV), and the 24 October 1970 resolution 2625 (XXV). She spoke of the strained relations between the Cayman Islands and the administering Power and of the ever-increasing disparity of their interests. It was at that point that an invitation was extended to the former Chairman of the Special Committee to visit the Cayman Islands. That visit took place, and, thanks to it, the people of the Cayman Islands now had information on all the self-determination options given in the United Nations resolutions.

35. The speaker said that substantial changes had taken place since the Caribbean Regional Seminar that was held in Anguilla in May 2003 and the address of the representative of the Constitutional Working Group to the Special Committee on Decolonization and the Fourth Committee in 2003. The United Kingdom had not abandoned its intention to introduce laws (including on financial matters) by means of orders of council that did not require parliamentary review. The people of the Cayman Islands also had serious concerns regarding the true intentions of the United Kingdom in connection with the collapse of the Euro Bank case and the unsavoury role of the United Kingdom in that fiasco, including the questionable behaviour of the former general prosecutor.

36. The United Kingdom had recently taken further steps to maintain the colonial structure of power; specifically, it was insisting on preserving the Governor's right to eavesdrop on telephone conversations without court authorization. All that was forcing the people of the islands to treat the self-determination process and constitutional amendments more seriously.

37. The speaker said that other Overseas Territories had moved much farther along on the path of constitutional amendments than had the Cayman Islands, including with regard to the question of the Governor's powers. That was why, in terms of drafting a new constitution, the experience of those territories was of particular interest to the Cayman Islands. A great deal of work had already been done on the draft of that constitution, but constitution-related talks had been suspended recently, and that gave the Special Committee an excellent opportunity to assist the Working Group in explaining all the options available for self-determination to the people of the Cayman Islands.

38. The Working Group was working to see that the talks proposed by the Government of the United Kingdom between the two political groups on the draft constitution were held in the Cayman Islands and with the broad participation of the public, civil servants, and the mass media. That would conform to the principles set forth by the Government of the United Kingdom in the paper titled "Partnership for Progress and Prosperity". The Working Group also feared that the results of the forthcoming general elections could be interpreted as a mandate to introduce constitutional amendments before all the possible options for self-determination had been properly explained to the public. Ensuring a genuine expression of will would require settling all disputed questions with a referendum. Including referendum provisions in the constitution of the Cayman Islands has been proposed more than once. And although the 11 December 2002 General Assembly resolution 57/138 B noted the adoption of a referendum law, that information did not match reality – the draft law on referendum was not sent to the Legislative Assembly for review.

39. With regard to the self-determination options, the speaker said that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom had only recently acknowledged for the first time that Overseas Territories have at least three, and possibly even four, options for constitutional amendments. But talks regarding the fourth option, which is provided for in resolution 2625 (XXV), could become rather difficult because of the unequal capabilities of the parties, and the United Kingdom has clearly indicated that the Cayman Islands could not expect a constitution like that of Bermuda. Because of that, the Working Group fully supported a campaign to explain all the options available for self-determination to the public.

40. As for the Special Committee on Decolonization, its goal consisted in ensuring self-determination for colonies, and there had been cases in which colonies had been de-listed as Self-Governing Territories after the

United Nations had become convinced that they had exercised their right to self-determination. The Government of the United Kingdom was also trying to de-list the Cayman Islands, but it was imperative that the Committee decisively defeat all such attempts until there was persuasive evidence that that conformed to the democratically expressed aspirations of the people of the Cayman Islands.

41. The speaker drew the Committee members' attention to a statement that had been made in November 2003 by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Bill Rammell. The statement, which was a response to criticism voiced at the Regional Seminar in Anguilla, held that the United Kingdom had not voted for resolution 1541 (XV) and did not regard itself bound by the provisions of that resolution and that the Government of the United Kingdom would not stand in the way of a broad majority seeking independence, but did not regard the option of integration as possible. However, implementation of the concept of free association, which evoked broad interest at the Anguilla seminar, faced a number of difficulties, because, in its current form, it presumed the right of the Non-Self-Governing Territory to determine its own constitution without any outside interference. That is, without the participation of the Government of the United Kingdom. As a result, it would be forced to continue to fulfil its obligations without the possibility of effecting good governance, fulfilling its international obligations, or protecting the Government of the United Kingdom and its taxpayers from the burden of unforeseen expenses. That would contradict the principle of partnership set forth in the paper "Partnership for Progress and Prosperity".

42. In response to that statement, the then Chairman of the Special Committee on Decolonization, Ambassador Huntley, sent Mr. Rammell a letter in which he reminded Mr. Rammell that the United Kingdom has been one of the authors of resolution 1541 (XV) and had abstained from voting solely because of differences over the issue of transmission of information. The Committee also regretted that the United Kingdom was trying to limit the self-determination options available to the territories to gaining independence or maintaining the status quo, even though the "free association" option was flexible enough to allow both parties to achieve their objectives.

43. The speaker stated that there were contradictions in various statements of the United Kingdom on the issue of self-determination, which engendered the need for additional explanations. In light of the United Kingdom's attempts to circumvent its international obligations, the Working Group called upon the Committee to remain steadfast in continuing the dialogue and discussions with the administering Power and the Overseas Territories. It was imperative that the United Nations and the United Kingdom be prepared to fulfil their international obligations by providing the necessary assistance to the Cayman Islands and other territories as required by various United Nations resolutions. It was necessary to promote the use of the expertise available in the Overseas Territories through partnership, participation, and the sharing of information and ideas. In light of that, the Working Group intended to conduct a Constitutional Forum for the British Overseas Territories in September 2004. The Working Group regarded that conference as an important step toward implementation of the Plan of Action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

44. The Constitutional Working Group felt that its efforts were in keeping with the Committee's goal to eradicate colonialism by 2010. It felt encouraged by the Committee's commitment to further develop the process begun in Anguilla through cooperation with the United Kingdom and the territories to achieve an acceptable solution that took into account both the aspirations of the people and the concerns of the administering Power.

45. Regarding the working paper on the Cayman Islands, the speaker noted that it contained extremely important information, but that there were some errors that would be pointed out to the Committee later. The speaker also called upon the Committee to update the information on its website regularly, including the publication of documents from regional seminars.

46. The people of the Cayman Islands were unshakable in their commitment to the goal of drafting a modern constitution while maintaining and exercising their inalienable right to self-determination, in the spirit of true partnership and in compliance with the international obligations under which all the parties were bound. In the process of decolonization, there was no alternative to the principle of self-determination, which was a fundamental human right.

47. **Mr. Requello Gual** (Cuba) said that he would like to hear the response of the administering Power to the serious accusations of manipulation and violations of the fundamental freedoms and civil rights of the people of

the territory that had been voiced in the Special Committee and in other forums. He also asked the petitioner to provide more detail as to why the territory was dissatisfied with the pace of its constitutional process as compared with that of other Non-Self-Governing Territories under British control, such as Montserrat and Gibraltar.

48. As for the matter of sending a visiting mission to the Cayman Islands, the Committee had not received the appropriate official invitation from the local government. The administering Power, it would seem, had no objection to such a visit; and if a properly executed letter were received, that matter could be resolved satisfactorily.

49. To date, the Special Committee had not received an invitation to participate in the meeting of the Forum of United Kingdom Overseas Territories, which was slated to be held in the Cayman Islands, in September of 2004.

50. As for the errors in the report, the speaker said it would be extremely useful to get the detailed remarks both of non-governmental organizations and of the territory authorities and other parties, so as to improve the report's quality and make it as reliable as possible.

51. The Cayman Islands would not be de-listed as a Non-Self-Governing Territory until a proper process involving broad discussions determined that they had achieved final and full self-determination.

52. **Mr. Ebanks** (Chamber of Commerce of Cayman Islands) said that many aspects of the differences between the process of constitutional development for the Cayman Islands and that of Montserrat and Gibraltar were cause for concern, and because of that, a separate document would be prepared. The process in the Cayman Islands was being implemented hastily, without complete information on all the possible options for self-determination as prescribed by United Nations resolutions. Her Majesty's Government had sent the Cayman Islands a checklist of 18 items pertaining to the process of constitutional development. Many of the items, as before, were not completed. Thus, the Cayman Islands needed additional time and an education campaign.

53. As for the question of the invitation, the Group, which the speaker represented, had sent a request to its Government, but still had not received a reply. As for the meeting planned for September, the first public announcement of it was at the current Committee session. In connection with that, two requests were being made of the Special Committee: that it provide financial assistance and that it provide experts for helping to conduct a campaign to educate the people of the Cayman Islands.

54. Detailed comments would be provided concerning the errors found in the report. In addition, it was disappointing that the report made no mention of the broad-scale work done in the Cayman Islands by a number of non-governmental organizations, including the organization the speaker represented. At the same time, the speaker was pleased by the statement made to the effect that the people of the Cayman Islands would be able to exercise their democratic right to self-determination on the basis of active participation in the discussion of the future status of the islands.

55. **Mr. Ortiz Gandarillas** (Bolivia) said that, as he understood it, the people of the Cayman Islands had now received information that was more complete on the existing options for exercising the right to self-determination, which was a positive development. In addition, he would like to know the extent to which the people of the islands had been informed of those options.

56. **Mr. Ebanks** (Chamber of Commerce of Cayman Islands) said that it was difficult to work under conditions in which the administering Power had initially acknowledged that there were three or four options for exercising the right to self-determination, but had then announced that not all the options were available to the Cayman Islands. Specifically, the official representative of the administering Power had announced that the United Kingdom had not voted for resolution 1541 (XV) and was not obligated to comply with it and that the option of integration was not being offered and that the concept of free association was unacceptable to the United Kingdom. Thus, the people of the Cayman Islands were left with just two options: maintaining the status quo, or independence. That violated their inalienable right to free choice and showed disrespect for the norms of international law and the decisions of the United Nations.

57. As for the extent to which the people of the Cayman Islands were informed of the self-determination options available, it was quite negligible. Work was being done by initiative groups and individuals who were not experts on the basis of information drawn from

Special Committee documents, but that was clearly inadequate.

58. *Mr. Ebanks withdrew.*

59. **The Chairman** drew the Special Committee's attention to the draft resolution on the question of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the United States Virgin Islands contained in the document A/AC.109/2004/L.11.

Other matters

60. **The Chairman**, addressing the question of controlling and limiting documentation, said that the Special Committee was in the forefront of the efforts aimed at reducing duplication of documentation and streamlining it. His verbatim records, for example, has been replaced by summary records, and the report that was to be presented by the Special Committee to the General Assembly had been streamlined. The Committee was publishing its own resolutions three times: first in the form of a draft as a document for limited distribution, then as resolutions adopted by the Committee, and finally included as part of the report to the General Assembly. To avoid duplication, it was suggested that the texts of resolutions not be released as individual documents after being adopted by the Special Committee. The rapporteur would be advised to conform the wording of the Committee's draft resolutions to the format used in the General Assembly when the Special Committee's report was being prepared. In keeping with existing practice, that report would properly reflect the texts of the draft resolutions and all the revisions and corrections made to them. The adoption of this proposal would make it possible to achieve substantial cost savings.

61. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 12:25 p.m.